

Message Text

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46

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 ISO-00 SAM-01 IO-10 SAJ-01 AID-05

CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 FRB-03 INR-07 NSAE-00 TRSE-00

XMB-02 OPIC-03 SP-02 CIEP-01 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01

STR-04 ACDA-05 PM-03 H-02 L-02 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SS-15 USIA-06 /111 W

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R 101043Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2438

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBADDY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

AMCONSUL LUANDA

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

USMISSION NATO

DIA WASHDC

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

AMCONSUL OPORTO

AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PO

SUBJ: CONVERSATION WITH NEW FOREIGN MINISTER

MAJOR ENERESTO AUGUSTO DE MELO ANTUNES

1. NEW FOREIGN MINISTER MELO ANTUNES HAD DINNER ALONE WITH DIRECTOR IBERIAN AFFAIRS LUKENS AND ME APRIL 9. WE SPECIFICALLY QUERIED HIM ON HOW INTERNAL AFFAIRS WOULD AFFECT GOP FOREIGN POLICY.

2. MELO ANTUNES SAID HE COULD UNDERSTAND THE ANXIETY IN U.S. AND EUROPE. BUT THESE COUNTRIES NEED TO SHOW MORE PATIENCE WITH PORTUGAL. THEY SHOULD UNDERSTAND THAT A TRANSITION TO DEMOCRACY TAKES TIME. WHILE THE FORTHCOMING ELECTIONS WOULD NOT BE PERFECT AND THERE WOULD CERTAINLY BE INCIDENTS, THIS WAS A FIRST STEP AND AN IMPORTANT ONE.

3. GOP FOREIGN POLICY PRESENTLY ENVISAGED BROADER CONTACTS WITH ALL OTHER COUNTRIES, ANTUNES SAID. BUT "IT IS REDICULOUS TO EXPECT THAT PORTUGAL WILL HAVE CLOSER RELATIONS WITH THE COMMUNIST COUNTRIES THAN WITH THE WEST, EVEN IF OUR INTERNAL IDEOLOGICAL ORIENTATION WERE CLOSER TO THAT OF THE COMMUNISTS, AND THAT IS NOT THE CASE." ANTUNES WENT ON TO EMPHASIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF ELECTIONS IN DETERMINING FUTURE FOREIGN POLICY ORIENTATION. SAID WE (IT WAS NOT CLEAR WHO HE MEANT BY WE, PROBABLY AFM) THINK COMMUNISTS WILL NOT GET MORE THAN 15 OR 17 PERCENT OF THE VOTE, AND THIS WILL ENABLE US TO DEVELOP A MORE REALISTIC FOREIGN POLICY. ALSO HINTED THAT LEADING PCP FIGURE OCTAVIO PATO HAD BEEN TOLD BY SOVIETS TO COLL IT DURING RECENT VISIT TO MOSCOW. (SOCIALISTS, BELGIAN AMBASSADOR, AND PRESIDENT'S CHIEF OF CABINET HAVE TOLD US THE SAME THING).

4. I ASKED ANTUNES WHAT PRIME MINISTER MEANT IN TALKING ABOUT ECONOMIC BOYCOTT (LISBON 2027), WHEN HE KNOWS THAT ALL OUR EFFORTS HAVE BEEN IN THE OTHER DIRECTION. ANTUNES REPLIED THAT THE WORD "BOYCOTT" WAS A STRONGER WORD THAN WHAT PRIME MINISTER INTENDED TO CONVEY. HE WAS REALLY POINTING TO A RELUCTANCE ON THE PART OF WESTERN COUNTRIES TO MAKE ADDITIONAL INVESTMENTS IN PORTUGAL. I SAID THIS WAS HARDLY SURPRISING IN THE LIGHT OF PLANT TAKE-OVERS AND THE FAILURE OF GOP TO DATE
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TO BE SPECIFIC ABOUT AREAS IN WHICH THE PRIVATE SECTOR WILL BE ALLOWED TO CONTINUE TO PARTICIPATE. ANTUNES AGREED FULLY ON BOTH POINTS. SAID GOP PLANNED TO TAKE MEASURES TO DEAL WITH PLANT TAKE-OVERS AND THAT HE HIMSELF WAS PUSHING VERY HARD FOR A CODE OF FOREIGN INVESTMENT.

5. WE TOUCHED BRIEFLY ON THE AZORES AND TIMOR. ANTUNES, WHOSE WIFE COMES FROM THE AZORES, SAID SEPARATIST MOVEMENTS

HAVE VERY LITTLE SUPPORT. AS FAR AS TIMOR IS CONCERNED, GOP EXPECTED TO HAVE "AN AGREEMENT SOON."

6. COMMENT: DURING LENGTHY DISCUSSION WE SAW NO EVIDENCE OF THIRD WORLD OBSESSION FREQUENTLY ATTRIBUTED TO ANTUNES. (OUR PS SOURCES CONFORM THAT ANTUNES' THIRD WORLD VISITS AND STATEMENTS ARE DESIGNED TO PROVIDE HIM WITH PROTECTIVE POLITICAL COVER, AND HE HAS NO ILLUSIONS ABOUT OBTAINING CONCRETE ASSISTANCE FROM THE THIRD WORLD). TO CONTRARY, HIS APPROACH WAS FRIENDLY, BALANCED AND PRAGMATIC. UNLIKE SOME GOP FIGURES, HE WAS NOT THIN SKINNED ABOUT CRITICISM OF EVENTS IN PORTUGAL. HE APPEARS TO BE TAKING HIS NEW JOB QUITE SERIOUSLY ALTHOUGH HE SEEMED EQUALLY AWARE OF THE POLITICAL DANGER TO HIM OF SPENDING TOO MUCH OF HIS TIME OUTSIDE THE COUNTRY.
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